

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Bryco Machine, Inc.

Chicago Manufacturing Center

Bryco Machine Makes Room to Grow

Client Profile:

Bryco Machine, founded in 1983, manufactures complex parts that require state-of-the-art equipment and high-level expertise in machining. The company has prototyping capabilities under the same roof as its production environment. Bryco Machine has long-standing customer relationships across industries including hydraulics, wireless communications, electronics, medical and dental, food processing, and with the Department of Defense. The company employs 50 people at its facility in Tinley Park, Illinois.

Situation:

Bryco Machine's president, Bryon Bettinardi, had great plans and prospects for aggressive business growth. He was prepared to invest in new machines, but had to find space for them in the plant. Bryco had a history of partnering with economic development and training organizations to identify resources. One of these partners, the Alliance for Illinois Manufacturing, introduced Bryco to the Chicago Manufacturing Center (CMC), a NIST MEP network affiliate. Bettinardi and his team attended a Lean 101 workshop offered by CMC through Chicago Manufacturing Works!, another economic development partner. They left the workshop convinced that Bryco needed to embrace Lean, and engaged CMC to help chart the course.

Solution:

The first step in Bryco's Lean journey was a plant optimization project. Bryco Machine is spread across two buildings totaling approximately 15,000 square feet. The CMC team helped Bryco with a shop reorganization that zeroed in on inefficiencies, causing immediate improvements in process flow. Machines were grouped together by class to reduce wasted space. The new layout could accommodate three new machines with room for four more--without adding any new floor space. Another space-saving suggestion from CMC was to standardize tool and inspection stations. A 5S project allowed the company to literally cut the existing work tables down to the size needed for the new layout, saving the cost of buying new, smaller work tables. CMC also suggested relocating the finishing department next to the quality department. This move freed up floor space, placed operators closer to their machines, and eliminated unnecessary foot traffic.

With a more efficient plant layout, Bryco was ready to implement Lean Manufacturing methods that could open the door to growth. CMC took the Bryco team through a Value Stream Mapping exercise to improve the linkage between customer demand and Bryco's production scheduling. Bryco's production was largely driven by the need to meet a major customer's weekly schedule: an order that came in one week had to be turned around and delivered the following week. CMC studied the demand pattern and suggested scheduling changes to not only reduce changeover time, but also measure it. As a result of the changes implemented to date, Bryco has solidified its position with its existing customer base and is well-positioned to take on new business.

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Results:

- * Increased machine capacity by 25 percent.
- * Reduced setup time by 66 percent.
- * Increased inventory turns from 4 per year to 14 per year.
- * Achieved a more competitive and profitable position.

Testimonial:

"The co-investment between Bryco and our partner organizations has been very successful. We have greatly benefited from expert guidance and consulting. Implementing a Lean Manufacturing program has helped us become more efficient, reduce waste and non-value-added time and generate more profit. CMC has helped Bryco reach the next level in precision machine shops."

Dennis Gilhooley, Jr., Vice President